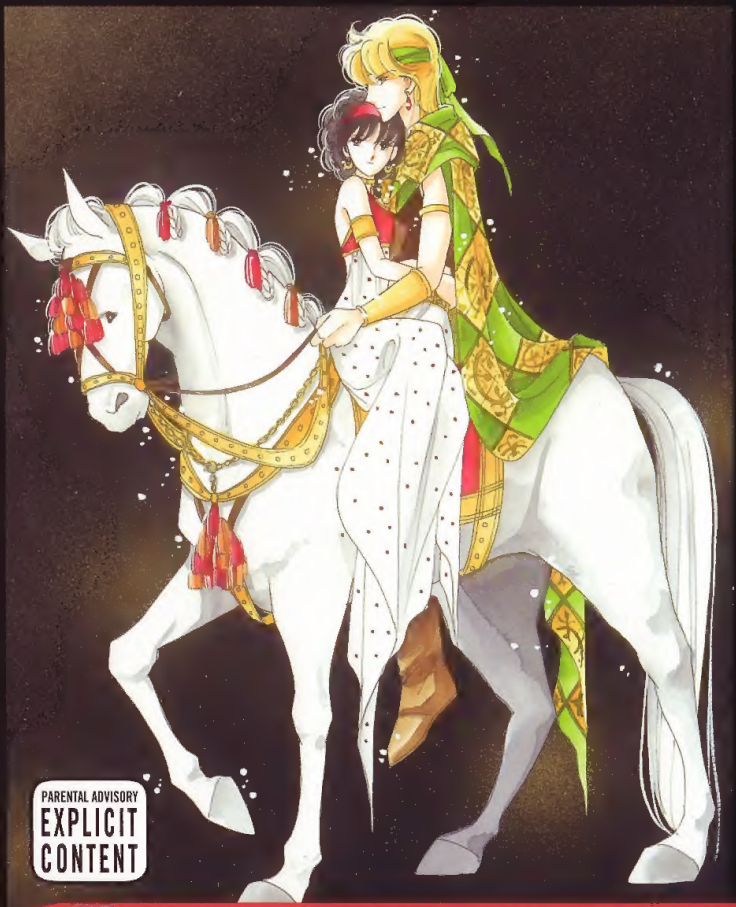
viz media
shôjo

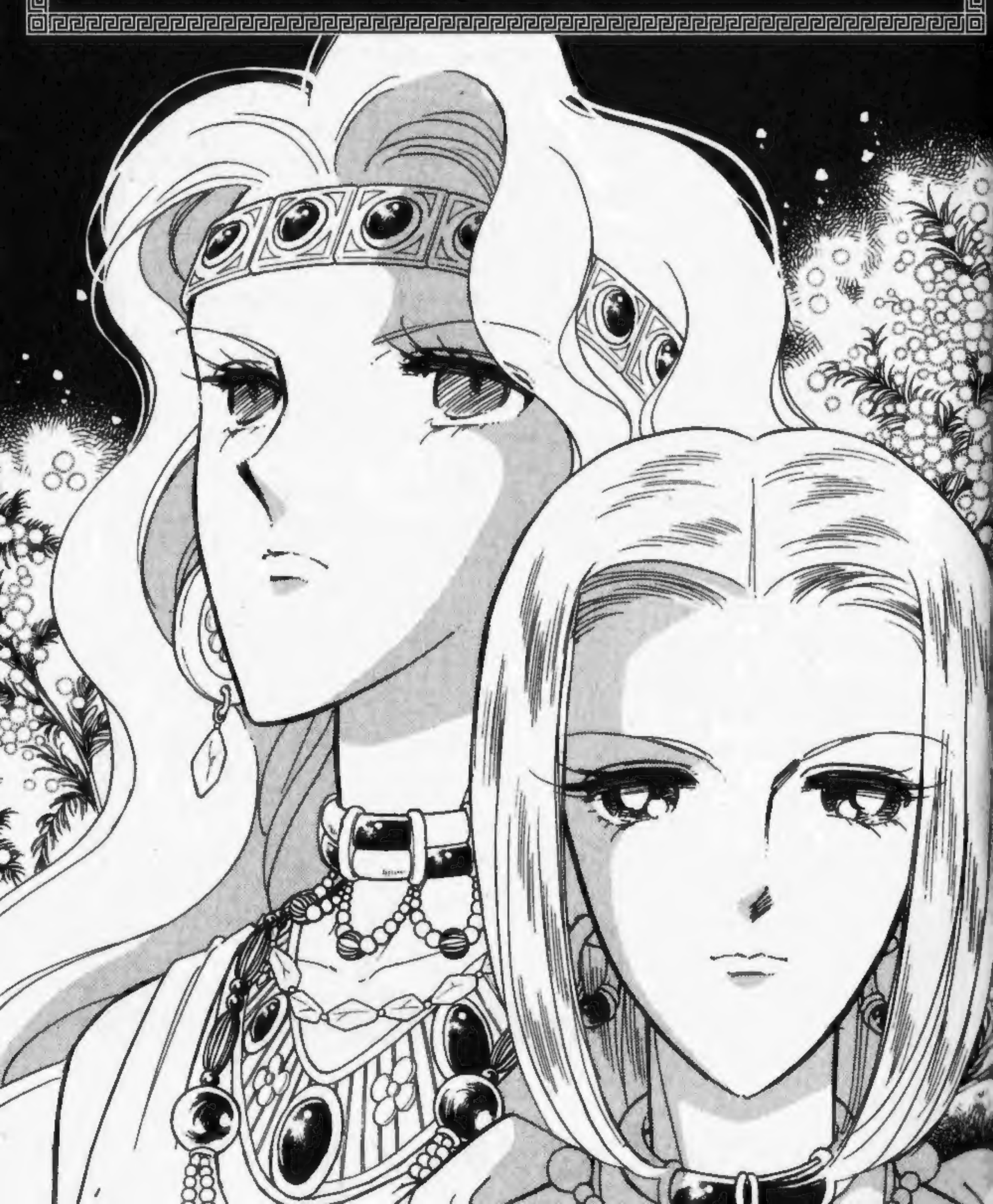
RED RIVER



16 story and art by **Chie Shinohara**

RED RIVER™

vol.16



Story Thus Far:



Mursili II
The former Crown Prince Kail, now king of the Hittite Empire.



Yuri
A Japanese schoolgirl magically transported to the ancient Hittite Empire.



Queen Nakia
Kail's stepmother, an evil sorceress determined to see her own son on the Hittite throne.

Yuri, a typical Japanese teenager, is sucked into a puddle and emerges in the ancient Hittite Empire! Evil Queen Nakia has drawn Yuri across time and space to be a sacrifice to her god, Teshub. Rescued by the handsome but arrogant Prince Kail, Yuri falls in love with him and willingly gives up all chance to return home. Believed to be the incarnation of the war goddess Ishtar by the Hittite people, Yuri strives to live up to their hopes and her own dreams by supporting Kail, who has now assumed the Hittite throne.

Yuri bears up as best she can under the harassment of the princesses in Kail's seraglio, but one finally goes too far by putting scorpions in Yuri's bed. Knowing this could have endangered His Majesty, Yuri tells the princesses off in no uncertain terms. The princesses are cowed, and Yuri at last gains control of the seraglio.

Later, Kail and Yuri learn that Nakia has sent her black water to one of the princesses. The question is, which one? Thinking it's an attempt on Yuri's life, they're shocked when three princesses are murdered instead, each in a way that casts suspicion on Yuri. But when another princess dies after Yuri is taken into custody, Yuri figures out that Nakia has lost control of her assassin by inadvertently unleashing the woman's own feelings of jealousy. Playing on this, Yuri flirts with Kail in the presence of the three surviving princesses, which causes Princess Selto to fly into a rage. She confesses to the murders and, thwarted in her attempt to escape, grabs Yuri's hand and leaps to certain death over a wall. Kail uses his magic to cushion their fall, but when he and his men rush downstairs they find only Selto. Yuri, for her part, finds herself in a storeroom with Rusafa, who is acting very strangely.



()

()

THIS IS WRONG!

THIS ISN'T THE RUSAFA I KNOW!

WHAT'S HAPPENED TO HIM?

...DID YOU DRINK NAKIA'S BLACK WATER?

RUSAFA...

...BUT THE HANDS OF A MAN!

THAT TIME... IT WASN'T THE HANDS OF PRINCESS SELTO THAT CAUGHT ME...

GASP!

INDEED HE DID.

WE SENT ENOUGH BLACK WATER..

...TO PUT TWO PEOPLE UNDER OUR CONTROL.

URHI!

THAT'S RIGHT, ISHTAR.

LONG TIME NO SEE.

I GET IT.

YOU GAVE RUSAFA THE BLACK WATER IN ORDER TO TAKE REVENGE ON ME.

YES.

I DID, HOWEVER, LOSE AN EYE THAT DAY.

SO...

...YOU'RE STILL ALIVE.

...I GAVE HIM NOTHING.

NO, ISHTAR...

WHAT?

RUSAFA DREW THE BLACK WATER TO HIMSELF.

IN THE CASE OF PRINCESS SELTO...

...IT WAS ATTRACTED TO THE HATRED AND JEALOUSY SHE FELT TOWARD YOU.

BUT IT WAS ALSO ORDERED TO FIND AND TAKE OVER SOMEONE WHO LOVES YOU DEEPLY.

...SO WE THOUGHT IT WOULD FIND ONE OF THE THREE SISTERS.

WE KNEW HIS MAJESTY'S MAGIC WOULD PROTECT HIM..

...

SOMEONE WHO LOVES ME?

ARE YOU SAYING THAT'S... RUSAFA?

...TO PLACE HER SON ON THE THRONE, BUT SHE'S BEEN THWARTED AGAIN AND AGAIN! WHAT MAKES HER PERSIST?

WHY, URHI?

WHY IS THE QUEEN DOWAGER SO OBSES-SED?

I KNOW SHE HOPES TO USE MY DEATH...

SHE'S BETRAYED YOU AT LEAST ONCE, AND WOULD NO DOUBT DO IT AGAIN. WHAT DO YOU POSSIBLY OWE HER?

LET ME ASK YOU THIS, THEN...

...WHY DO YOU REMAIN SO FAITHFUL TO HER?

...DID YOU EVER HEAR ME MENTION THE QUEEN DOWAGER'S NAME IN CONNECTION WITH THIS PLOT?

ISH-TAR...

I SEE.

YOU'RE STILL TRYING TO PROTECT HER.

ISHTAR..

...YOU'D BEST FOCUS ON YOUR OWN SITUATION.

PRINCESS YURI!

PRINCESS YURI!

RYUI! AND SHALA!

YOU'RE STILL PLANNING TO BEHEAD ME?

I HAVEN'T BROUGHT YOU HERE... ...TO MAKE SMALL TALK.

SUDDEN ATTACK!

UNGH...

RUSAFA, GO!

RUSTLE

...SHE'S NOT HERE.

NO...

WE'LL KEEP LOOKING.

ALL RIGHT.

DID YOU FIND PRINCESS YURI?

RUSAFA!

IF YOU CAN, PLEASE ANSWER US!

PRINCESS YURI!

RUSAFA!

DID YOU FIND YURI?

BUT NO LUCK!

YOUR MAJESTY! WE'VE LOOKED AND LOOKED!

QUEEN DOWAGER!

WHERE'S YURI? WHAT HAVE YOU DONE WITH HER?

YOUR EXCEL-LENCY...

...WHAT YOU ARE TALKING ABOUT?

RETURN HER TO ME!

AND I KNOW YOU'RE BEHIND IT!

YURI'S DISAPPEARED!

THESE MURDERS HAVE RATTLED YOU, YOUR EXCELLENCY!

...WHAT THIS IS ABOUT, SO...

YOU AND I BOTH KNOW...

VERY WELL.

...I MUST INSIST THAT YOU REMAIN IN MY PALACE.

SHUMP

...UNTIL YURI SHOWS UP, UNHARMED...

LET ME REMIND YOU THAT....

I AM THE QUEEN DOWAGER OF THIS EMPIRE! I GO WHERE I CHOOSE!

SUCH INSOLENCE!

...I AM THE *KING* OF THIS EMPIRE...

...AND I AM *HERE*, NOT ON SOME DISTANT BATTLEFIELD. YOU WILL DO AS I SAY.

ISSUE A DECREE IN MY NAME.

CHAIRMAN AYGIL.

A DECREE?

Y...YES SIR.

...AND TO WISH THE SAFE RETURN OF OUR ISHTAR, WHOM TESHUP GAVE US TO AID US IN THESE TIMES.

...TO CALM US AFTER THE RECENT TRAGEDIES IN THE PALACE...

IN THE NAME OF KING MURSILI II, A PUBLIC PRAYER WILL BE OFFERED TO THE GOD TESHUP...

...YURI IS NOT RETURNED...

IF...

GRAB

...UN-HARMED...

...A NOBLE SACRIFICE WILL BE MADE TO TESHUP.

JUST ISSUE THE DECREE, CHAIRMAN.

YES SIR!

HUH?

RUSTLE

URHI WILL UNDER-STAND WHAT I MEAN.

...I DON'T GET WHAT—

SIR! I...

YOU CAN'T INTIMIDATE ME.

I KNOW VACUOUS POSTURING WHEN I SEE IT.

...BUT DO YOU REALLY BELIEVE THAT MY WILL IS UNEQUAL TO MY WORD?

MOTHER..

...THE CRUELTY OF KINGS WHO HAVE FALLEN IN LOVE WITH THEIR CONCUBINES IS LEGENDARY. YOU MAY DISDAIN ME...

SWAP

IF YURI DOESN'T RETURN SOON...

...YOUR SEVERED HEAD WILL HANG ON ONE OF THE CITY WALLS.

WHICH WILL IT BE, MOTHER?

DID YOU HEAR? ISHTAR IS MISSING!

I HOPE SHE COMES BACK TO US SOON.

HIS MAJESTY IS GOING TO OFFER A PRAYER AT THE MAIN TEMPLE FOR HER SAFE RETURN.

YES, I HEARD.

WHEN WILL WE KNOW WHO'LL BE OUR NEW QUEEN?

MAAH MAAH MAAH MAAH MAAH

THERE HAVE BEEN TOO MANY TRAGEDIES WITHIN OUR ROYAL FAMILY LATELY.

HIS MAJESTY IS CERTAINLY A BOLD MAN!

HIS MAJESTY SAYS HE INTENDS TO SACRIFICE A PERSON...

...OF NOBLE BIRTH TO THE GOD TESHUP IF ISHTAR DOESN'T RETURN. THE TOWNS-PEOPLE ARE MAKING A BIG FUSS ABOUT IT.

URH!, YOU...

...HAVEN'T ANSWERED MY QUESTION YET!

WHAT DO YOU GAIN BY IT?

WHAT DO YOU HOPE TO DO AFTER ENTHRONING PRINCE JUDA?

WHY ARE YOU LOYAL TO THE QUEEN DOWAGER?

YOU'RE RIGHT.

THAT'S NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS.

YOU'RE RIGHT, BUT...

RUSTLE

RUSAFA!

STOP HER!

RUSH

SNAP OUT OF IT!

RUSAFA!

LET ME GO!

LET ME GO, YOU BEAST!

DON'T RESIST!

MY GOD...ALL THOSE SCARS!

KNOCK
KNOCK

YES, TURGU?

...HIS MAJESTY'S PERMITTED ME TO VISIT YOU.

ELDER SISTER ...

...THEY SAY PRINCESS SELTO WAS UNDER SOMEONE'S CONTROL DURING HER MURDER SPREE.

ELDER SISTER ...

SO WHAT?

SISTER!

AND I KNOW YOU CAN USE WATER TO CONTROL *PEOPLE!*

I KNOW YOU CAN CONTROL WATER!

SO...?

SHE WAS YOUR NIECE! HOW COULD YOU DO THAT?

IT WAS *YOU*, WASN'T IT?!

WHY? WHY WOULD YOU KILL ISHIN SAURA, TOO?

I KNOW YOU WANT YOUR SON, PRINCE JUDA, ON THE HITTITE THRONE, BUT...

YOU...CAN SAY SUCH A THING?!

OUR ELDER BROTHER HAS MANY DAUGHTERS.

LOSING ONE WON'T HURT HIM THAT BADLY.

YOU'RE RIGHT.

BABYLONIA WAS ABLE TO EMERGE FROM A PERIOD OF DECLINE BECAUSE OF THE HITTITES' HELP.

THE HITTITE EMPIRE NOT ONLY OFFERED PROTECTION BUT PROVIDED BABYLONIA WITH JEWELRY AND IRON TOOLS.

THERE COULD EVEN BE WAR BETWEEN THE TWO NATIONS!

...DON'T YOU SEE WHAT COULD HAPPEN TO OUR COUNTRY, BABYLONIA...

... IF THE PEOPLE FIND OUT WHAT YOU'VE DONE? THE HITTITES WILL SUSPEND THEIR AID!

SPLASH

THAT WAS *MY* DOING!

IT HAPPENED BECAUSE I BECAME, AND REMAIN, THE TAWANANNA!

YOU HAVE NO RIGHT TO CRITICIZE ME!

BUT MURSILI II IS A KING OF MANY VIRTUES...

...VIRTUES IT WOULD BE FOLLY TO CHALLENGE!

WHY CAN'T YOU BE SATISFIED WITH YOUR POSITION?

QUEEN HINTI'S EARLY DEATH WAS YOUR SINGULAR FORTUNE.

TAWANANNA IS THE HIGHEST POSITION FOR A WOMAN IN THE HITTITE EMPIRE, USUALLY BESTOWED FOR LIFE ON A KING'S WIFE OR DAUGHTER.

HOW SO?

YOU ARE SO NAIVE, LITTLE BROTHER.

E...ELDER SISTER, YOU...

...DON'T MEAN TO SAY YOU...

DO YOU THINK FORTUNE ALONE MADE ME TAWA-NANNA?

DO YOU REALLY BELIEVE IT WAS MERE FATE THAT ENDED QUEEN HINTI'S LIFE?

CAN IT BE SO...?

...KILLED QUEEN HINTI?

KING MURSILI'S MOTHER?

SMIRK

SHUDDER
SHUDDER

SHUDDER

I SNATCHED THE POSITION FOR MYSELF!

...I DIDN'T BECOME TAWA-NANNA BY ACCIDENT.

REMEMBER THIS, LITTLE BROTHER..

YOU SEE...

...ARNU-WANDA II...

IT SHOCKS YOU, DOES IT?

THEN LET ME GIVE YOU THE COMPLETE PICTURE.

KLINK

SHIVER

SHIVER

YOU KILLED THE FORMER QUEEN SO YOU COULD...

THAT IS A *HORRIBLE* SIN, MY SISTER!

SHIVER

WHAT?! NO!

...THE FORMER KING...

...ALSO DIED BY MY HAND.

...IT WOULD MEAN THE END OF BABY-LONIA—

SARA

THIS... THIS IS MADNESS!!

IF THE HITTITES FIND OUT WHAT YOU HAVE DONE...

BABYLONIA SOLD ME TO THE HITTITES, THEREBY MANAGING TO REVERSE ITS DECLINE!

KRAK

WHAT DID BABYLONIA DO FOR ME IN RETURN?

WHAT DO I CARE FOR BABYLONIA?!

S... SISTER..?

NOTHING!

BUT BABYLONIA WAS TOO BUSY REBUILDING TO CARE! I'D ALREADY SERVED MY PURPOSE!

I WAS A STRANGER HERE...

...FORCED TO MARRY THE HITTITE KING!

I WAS INTOLERABLY LONELY!

MY HUSBAND, SUPPILULIUMA I, ALREADY HAD MANY WIVES. I WAS JUST ANOTHER ADDITION TO THE SERAGLIO.

I HAD NO ONE TO RELY UPON.

I HAD TO DEPEND ON MYSELF TO SURVIVE.

MY LONE HOPE WAS TO SECURE A HIGHER POSITION FOR MYSELF.

AS FOR ME, I WAS CONDEMNED TO BE JUST ANOTHER CONCUBINE IN THAT CLOSE-KNIT ROYAL FAMILY.

THE CROWN PRINCE HAD ALREADY BEEN SELECTED...

HIS FIRST WIFE WAS QUEEN HINTI. SHE WAS FROM A NOBLE FAMILY, QUITE BEAUTIFUL, AND HAD THE LOVE AND RESPECT OF THE PEOPLE OF THE EMPIRE.

...AND THE KING HAD MANY OTHER SONS INCLUDING KAIL AND ZANNANZA. THEY ALL HAD BRIGHT FUTURES.

HUFF

HUFF

HUFF

S... SISTER, I...

DID

DID

DID

THAT'S WHY I DID IT, LITTLE BROTHER! ALL OF IT!

NOW YOU KNOW, TURGU, AND...

...FOR BABYLONIA'S SAKE, YOU'D BEST KEEP YOUR MOUTH SHUT.

CREAK

EX... EXCUSE ME, SISTER..

CREAK

I WAS ONLY 15 YEARS OLD...

I WAS SO ALONE AND HOMESICK...

...WHEN I WAS SENT HERE.

RUSTLE

RUSTLE

!!

RUSTLE

SPLASH

I'VE COME THIS FAR, I CAN'T...

...ABANDON MY DREAMS NOW!

YOU DON'T WANT TO KNOW WHY I HAVE...

...THESE SCARS ON MY BACK, YURI?

...

!

NO, I DON'T.

I'M SURE THE STORY'S UN-PLEASANT.

...WHAT YOU AND QUEEN DOWAGER NAKIA HAVE DONE!

NO MATTER WHAT YOU'VE SUFFERED, I CAN'T FORGIVE...

BUT I DON'T WANT TO FEEL SORRY FOR YOU.

HMM..

...I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN.

NO ROOM TO DISCUSS THE QUEEN DOWAGER'S PLANS, THOUGH?

WELL...

...THEN LET'S DISCUSS...

HIS EXCELLENCY SAYS HE WILL KILL THE QUEEN DOWAGER IF I'M NOT RELEASED.

...WHAT YOU INTEND TO DO WITH ME NOW.

WELL SAID, PRINCESS YURI.

I'M NOT TRYING TO JUSTIFY MY ACTIONS TO YOU.

WE ARE DEALING WITH HOW THINGS STAND NOW.

...THEN WHY NOT JUST KILL ME?

IF, AS YOU CLAIM, YOU ARE NOT ACTING FOR HER..

...I WAS AMAZED...

YOU KNOW...

...SO COM-PLETELY IN LOVE WITH YOU.

...THAT KAIL MURISILI FELL...

SNAP

URHI!
WAIT!

YOU'VE BOUND ME SO TIGHTLY!

RUSAFA!
PLEASE UNTIE ME!

RUSAFA
...

...MAKE SURE SHE DOESN'T ESCAPE.

RUSAFA! LISTEN TO ME!

I DON'T CARE ABOUT URHI OR NAKIA'S PAST. I ONLY CARE ABOUT THE PRESENT!

I'M WORRIED ABOUT KAIL, BECAUSE OF WHAT'S HAPPENED ON HIS WATCH.

HE COULD LOSE THE CONFIDENCE OF HIS PEOPLE. COMPARED TO THAT, I DON'T MATTER.

RAAA

YOUR MAJESTY!

...PLEASE PROCEED TO THE MAIN TEMPLE.

MOTHER..

IT IS ABSOLUTELY OUTRAGEOUS FOR YOU TO TREAT YOUR TAWANANNA LIKE THIS!

ARE YOU READY TO ACCEPT THE CONSE-QUENCES IF YURI DOES NOT RETURN?

BUT NOT, AS YOU KNOW, UNPREC-EDENTED.

DO YOU THINK YOU CAN RETAIN THE THRONE AFTER THIS?

I CAN'T THINK WHY *YOU* SHOULD WORRY ABOUT THAT.

FLAP

HE'S... SERIOUS!

DOES HE LOVE HER *THAT MUCH?!*

TESHUP, GUARDIAN OF THE HITTITE EMPIRE...

...MAY YOU, BY YOUR GRACE, RETURN OUR ISHTAR TO US!

IF YOU DON'T, I *WILL* KILL NAKIA!

URHI, RETURN YURI TO ME!

IT'S AN ATTACK!

RUN!

HIS MAJESTY MEANS IT.

WHAT A NUISANCE...

WE SAW HIM IN THE FOREST A WHILE AGO.

HE WAS LOOKING FOR PRINCESS YURI.

HAVE YOU SEEN RUSAFA LATELY?

HE WAS NEAR THE BARN...

...AND HE TOLD US HE HADN'T FOUND PRINCESS YURI.

THAT'S STRANGE.

WE WERE ALL ORDERED TO WATCH THE QUEEN DOWAGER.

?!

I HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO FIND HIM.

ARE YOU SAYING RUSAFA COULD HAVE BEEN UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF THE BLACK WATER, TOO?

SAME HERE. SHE COULDN'T HAVE COMMIT-TED THOSE MURDERS WITHOUT HELP FROM SOMEONE ON THE INSIDE.

I'VE BEEN WONDERING HOW PRINCESS SELTO COULD KILL THOSE PRINCESSES WITHOUT BEING CAUGHT.

THU-

-NK

AH!

-UD

-B

BUT WHO SHOT IT?

IT'S AN ARROW!

GRAB

IT CAME FROM THAT DIRECTION.

LOOK AT THIS!



IT'S PRINCESS YURI'S!

A PIECE OF HAY...

TIED TO THE ARROW WITH A DRY STRAW...

...FROM THE BARN IN THE FOREST!

PRINCESS YURI.

I'M GOING TO RELEASE YOU.

HIS MAJESTY!

IS HE ALL RIGHT? YOU WENT AWAY AND—

WHAT?

WAIT! UNTIE ME BEFORE YOU GO!

I DID NOTHING TO HIM, I ASSURE YOU.

YOUR AIDES WILL BE HERE SHORTLY.

MEANWHILE, WHY NOT ENTERTAIN YOUR LOYAL COMMANDER?

YOUR AIDES WON'T BE HERE RIGHT AWAY.

?!

I TOLD YOU RUSAFA'S ...

...BEEN IN LOVE WITH YOU FOR QUITE SOME TIME.

WOULD YOU LEAVE HIM UNREWARDED, HIS PASSIONS UNREQUITED?

...TO FULFILL YOUR SECRET DREAMS. DON'T WASTE IT.

RUSAFA...

...THIS IS YOUR FIRST AND LAST CHANCE...

WAIT A MINUTE...

URHI!

BIG TROUBLE !

IF RUSAFA DRANK NAKIA'S BLACK WATER..

...PRINCESS YURI'S IN TROUBLE.

TOUCHING ISHTAR WOULD BE A CRIME WORSE THAN MURDER!

HE MUSTN'T!

...DOING SOME-THING... UNFORGIV-ABLE?

DO YOU THINK RUSAFA'S ...

NAKIA TOOK ADVANTAGE OF RUSAFA'S LOVE FOR PRINCESS YURI.

...YOU MUST RESIST... PLEASE...

RUSAFA...

I'M SO IN LOVE...

...WITH MY GOD-DESS.

FULFILL MY DREAMS?

RUSAFA...

RUSAFA!

COME TO YOUR SENSES, PLEASE!



RUSAFA WANTED TO KEEP HIS LOVE FOR PRINCESS YURI TO HIMSELF.

ORDINARILY, HE WOULD NEVER CONSIDER LAYING A HAND ON HER.

BUT IF HE'S TOTALLY UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF THE BLACK WATER, HE MAY KNOW NO RESTRAINT...

DON'T, RUSAFA!

HE'LL BE PUNISHED SEVERELY IF HE TOUCHES HIS MAJESTY'S CONCUBINE!

HIS MAJESTY WOULD UNDERSTAND WHAT HAPPENED, BUT EVEN HE COULDN'T...

...OVERLOOK SUCH A VIOLATION!

THAT'S THE BARN!

BANG!

RUSAFA!

PRINCESS YURI?!

PLIP PLIP PLIP

?!


WHAT'S GOING ON?
RUSAFA'S BEEN DOING THIS...
...SINCE URHI LEFT US...

URHI TOLD RUSAFA ...

...THIS WAS HIS CHANCE TO REALIZE HIS DREAMS.

RUSAFA ...?

SLUMP

..THAT I'M AFRAID TO TOUCH HER.

I'M SO IN LOVE WITH HER...

SHE IS MY SACRED GODDESS.

EVERY-THING WILL BE ALL RIGHT.

NOTHING, PRINCESS YURI.

WHAT... WHAT...

...SHOULD I DO, KASH?

WE'LL UNTIE YOU.

COME ON, RUSAFA, GET UP.

AAAH!

KASH!

BOOM

GRAB

FORGIVE ME, RUSAFA.

UNH!

HAUGH!

KOFF KOFF

I...
I'M..

PLEASE FORGET ALL THIS.

NOW THAT HE'S COUGHED UP THE BLACK WATER, HE'LL NEVER BOTHER YOU AGAIN.

RUSAFA!

GO TO HIS MAJESTY, PRINCESS YURI.

WE'LL TAKE CARE OF HIM.

PLEASE GO TO HIS MAJESTY. ISHTAR MUST RETURN.

YOU SHOULD FOCUS ON THE MATTERS AT HAND.

ALL RIGHT! BACK TO THE PALACE!

HURRY, PRINCESS YURI.

KASH IS RIGHT.

...HIS MAJESTY.

JUST THINK ABOUT...

...OR KAIL'S MARRIAGE!

THAT'S RIGHT. NOTHING'S BEEN RESOLVED ABOUT PRINCESS SELTO...

ILBANI!

OKAY! THEN—

THE DOCTORS ARE SEEING TO PRINCESS SELTO.

HIS MAJESTY'S AT THE MAIN TEMPLE.

WHERE'S HIS MAJESTY?

AND PRINCESS SELTO?

PRINCESS YURI!

THEY KNOW FOUR PRINCESSES HAVE BEEN MURDERED AT THE PALACE.

YET THEY SEEM TO BE MORE CONCERNED ABOUT THEIR ISHTAR.

BARABARA

...WERE MISSING, THEY GATHERED AT THE PLAZA IN FRONT OF THE MAIN TEMPLE.

THE TOWNSPEOPLE. WHEN THEY LEARNED THAT YOU..

WHAT'S THAT NOISE?

ROAR

LET'S GO TO THE TEMPLE!

ROAR

...ILBANI?

WHAT IS IT...

PLEASE WAIT.

HUH?

PRINCESS YURI..

...ARE YOU A GOOD SWIMMER?

RAAH ROAR

...HELP HIS MAJESTY OUT.

I HAVE AN IDEA THAT MIGHT...

WHY DO YOU ASK?

SMILE

THE TEMPLE SPRING AND ITS SOURCE BEHIND THE TEMPLE ...

...ARE CONNECTED BY AN ANCIENT DUCT.

HUH?

WHAT'S HE THINKING?

IT'S HIS MAJESTY'S FAULT.

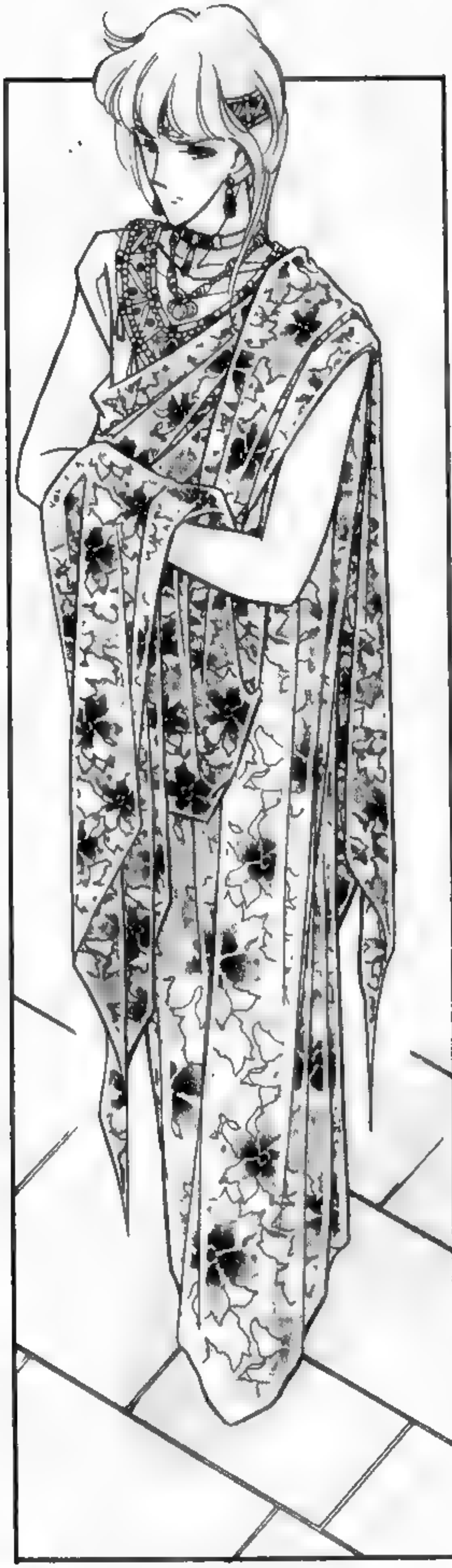
ISHTAR WAS SENT TO US BY THE GODS.

YET HIS MAJESTY HASN'T SEEN FIT TO TAKE HER AS HIS WIFE.

WHAT'S GOING ON? IS ISHTAR STILL MISSING?

I'M AFRAID SO.

ROAR ISHTAR ROAR




YOUR
MAJESTY.


THAT'S
ANGERED
THE GODS,
AND THEY'VE
HIDDEN
ISHTAR
FROM US.
ISHTAR

WHY?

THIS IS ALL JUST A CHARADE...

GUANUE

NO, BUT MAY I ASK YOU...

...TO PRAY AT THE SPRING BEFORE THE MAIN TEMPLE?

ILBANI.

HAS URHI CONTACTED US YET?

I HAVE NO REAL PRAYERS TO OFFER UP TODAY.

...TO SEND A MESSAGE TO URHI ABOUT YURI.

...MY HUMBLE ADVICE WOULD BE TO DO IT AT THE SPRING... YOUR MAJESTY.

I REALIZE THAT.

CONTINUE THE PRETENSE, BUT...

YOU'RE *HUMBLE* ADVICE, EH?

SMILE

HERE COMES HIS MAJESTY!

HIS MAJESTY HAS APPEARED IN FRONT OF THE TEMPLE!

ROAR

KARAKURI

HUSH

HEAR ME TESHUP, SUPREME GOD OF THE HITTITES!

AS THE KING OF THIS EMPIRE, I COME FORWARD AND BESEECH YOU...

...TO RETURN OUR BELOVED ISHTAR TO US!

SILENCE

MUR MUR MUR MUR MUR MUR

I THINK ISHTAR'S GONE FOR GOOD.

NOTHING'S HAPPEN-ING.

WE AWAIT YOUR WILL, TESHUP!

?!

BLUB

C. C. C.

...HASN'T MARRIED HER! TESHUP MUST BE VERY UPSET!

SHE'S NOT COMING BACK!

MURMUR

MURMUR

MURMUR

TESHUP MUST BE VERY ANGRY!

MURMUR

TESHUP SENT ISHTAR TO HIS MAJESTY, BUT HIS MAJESTY...

BLUB
BLUB
BLUB
?!
92

ثلج



البحيرة الزرقاء

THE LEGEND TELLS...

...AND BROUGHT GLORY TO THE HITTITE EMPIRE.

SHE WAS A SMALL WOMAN WITH BLACK HAIR, BLACK EYES, AND SMOOTH, IVORY COLORED SKIN. SHE EMERGED FROM THE SPRING.

...THAT A GODDESS DESCENDED FROM THE SKY FOR THE BENEFIT OF KING MURSILI II.

YURI!



YOU HAVE MORE IMPORTANT MATTERS THAN MY SAFETY TO CONCERN YOU.

THERE'S YOUR MARRIAGE, FOR INSTANCE...

KAIL...

...I'M SORRY FOR THE WORRY I CAUSED YOU.

I HAVE ALREADY MADE UP MY MIND ABOUT IT.

YOU HAVE?

I SHOULD HAVE ANNOUNCED IT BEFORE NAKIA WAS ABLE TO LAUNCH YET ANOTHER PLOT AGAINST YOU.

I HESITATED, WITH GHASTLY CONSE-QUENCES. I'M SO SORRY...

YOU'VE... MADE UP YOUR MIND ABOUT YOUR MARRIAGE?

PRINCESS ADDA CHARLATO? PRINCESS ALEXANDRA?

THEY'RE THE ONLY ONES LEFT!

MY GOD, WHOM HAS HE CHOSEN?

YOUR EXCELLENCY.

QUEEN DOWAGER...

YES, YOU MAY.

THIS CEREMONY IS CONCLUDED.

NOW THAT YOUR CONCUBINE HAS RETURNED...

...MAY I RETURN TO MY PALACE?

TA...
TAWA-
NANNA.

LONG
LIVE
TAWANANNA...

...YURI
ISHTARI

WHAT... DO THEY MEAN?

LONG LIVE TAWANANNA ISHTAR!

TAWANANNA ISHTAR!

TAWANANNA!

TAWANANNA!

LONG LIVE ISHTAR!

TAWANANNA ISHTAR!

TA... TAWANANNA ISHTAR!

TAWANANNA ISHTAR!

TAWANANNA ISHTAR!

ROAR

ROAR

ROAR

ROAR

ROAR

AAAHH

QUEEN DOWAGER NAKIA IS OUR TAWANANNA!

PLEASE, PEOPLE!

TAWANANNA ISHTAR!

I SAID, BE QUIET!

ISHTAR!

BE QUIET!

ISHTAR!

I'LL NEVER BE TAWA-NANNA.

...

RRROAR

RAAH

I...I'M GLAD THE PEOPLE LIKE ME...

...BUT WHY DO THEY SHOUT OUT LIKE THIS?

YURI ISHTAR!

PLEASE BE OUR TAWANANNA!

KOOOO

RAAAAAAAAH

ROOAR

YOUR MAJESTY...

PRINCESS YURI..

I AWAIT YOUR JUDGMENT.

...FOR WHAT I HAVE DONE.

...I'M PROFOUNDLY SORRY...

YES, AND...

RUSAFA! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

I KNOW, SIR.

PLEASE DO AS YOU SEE FIT.

INDEED.

RUSAFA, I KNOW YOU WERE UNDER SOMEONE ELSE'S CONTROL WHEN YOU KIDNAPPED YURI.

HOWEVER, THE PUBLIC WILL SOON FIND OUT YOU WERE THE CULPRIT AND DEMAND YOUR PUN-ISHMENT.

YET, EVEN THEN, HIS SENSE OF HONOR HELD FAST...

RUSAFA'S FEELINGS FOR ME MADE HIM VULNERABLE TO NAKIA'S MACHINA-TIONS.

RUSAFA ...

I'M...I'M SORRY...

FLINCH

I WILL PASS SENTENCE IN DUE TIME.

UNTIL THEN, YOU WILL REMAIN IN THE CUSTODY OF KASH AND MITTANNAMWA.

HUH?!

FEND

I'M SURE RUSAFA WANTED TO KEEP HIS LOVE FOR YOU PRIVATE...

...SO PRETEND THAT YOU NEVER CAME TO KNOW OF IT.

WHAT? BUT...

DON'T APOLO-GIZE, YURI.

...I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE BEST IF I TOLD RUSAFA THAT I CAN'T ACCEPT HIS LOVE.

IS KAIL RIGHT... SHOULD I SIMPLY NEVER MENTION IT?

OH MY...

POOR RUSAFA, HE'S A GOOD MAN...

BUT IT'S DIFFICULT TO PRETEND I NEVER NOTICED.

PERHAPS THAT IS BEST.

KAMUI

THE PEOPLE HAVE GONE HOME AT LAST.

KAIL...

THEY'RE THRILLED THAT YOU HAVE COME BACK TO US.

I COULD NEVER ACCEPT RUSAFA'S LOVE...

...ABOUT THAT, DON'T YOU?

...BECAUSE I HAVE KAIL.

BUT YOU KNOW WHO IS THE MOST OVER-JOYED...

KAIL IS THE ONLY MAN I LOVE, BUT...

FLINCH

PLEASE, NOT TONIGHT!

N...NO...

...LET'S NOT... DO THIS TONIGHT, KAIL.

IS THAT WHAT'S WEIGHING ON YOUR MIND TONIGHT?

IS IT BECAUSE OF RUSAFA?

NO, PLEASE!

BP

...

!!

...BROAD-MINDED ENOUGH TO RETURN ANOTHER MAN'S...

...GIFT TO HIS WOMAN.

OR SOFT-HEADED

SULKY

WHIP

M... MY NECKLACE!

I MUST BE THE ONLY MAN ON EARTH...

KAIL...

I PROMISE TO SERVE YOU ANY WAY I CAN.

...I'LL TRY TO BE AS NICE TO YOU AS YOU ARE TO ME...

...EVEN AFTER YOU'RE... MARRIED.

SQUEEZE

A NICE OFFER, BUT POINTLESS.

WHY DO YOU SAY THAT?!

BECAUSE...

...THE WOMAN I'M MARRYING...

...IS YOU, YURI. I'VE MADE UP MY MIND.

...THINK AGAIN.

THEN...

WHAT?

I SAID...

...I'M MARRYING YOU.

ARE YOU... SERIOUS?

I NEVER THOUGHT... IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE.

YOU KNOW THAT I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR THE RIGHT WOMAN TO BE MY WIFE.

SHE MUST HAVE BOTH GREAT LEADERSHIP QUALITIES AND CONSIDERABLE SELF-RESTRAINT.

I'LL EXPECT A LOT OF HER, NOT JUST AS A WOMAN BUT ALSO AS QUEEN OF THE HITTITE EMPIRE...

AND THAT WOMAN, YURI, IS *YOU!*

...AN EMPIRE WHICH CONTROLS HALF THE ORIENT. SHE MUST HAVE NOT ONLY MY RESPECT, BUT THAT OF THE PEOPLE...

...A PEOPLE, AS YOU SAW TODAY, WHO KNOW THEIR OWN MINDS!

I HAVE NO INTENTION OF MARRYING ANYONE ELSE! DO YOU UNDERSTAND?

ONLY SUCH A WOMAN COULD HAVE MY LOVE!

KAIL WANTS ME TO BE HIS WIFE?

HE WANTS ME TO BE TAWANANNA OF THE HITTITE EMPIRE?

NAKIA'S PALACE

I NEVER IMAGINED ...

...ANY-THING LIKE THIS COULD HAPPEN.

BLUB BLUB

WE MAY HAVE BROUGHT THE WRONG GIRL HERE.

KAIL MURSILI HAS COURTED MANY WOMEN IN THE PAST, BUT HE'S NEVER REALLY...

...FALLEN IN LOVE WITH ANY OF THEM.

HER APPEARANCE HERE IS NO STROKE OF FORTUNE.

RATHER, SHE'S A BAD OMEN FOR THIS EMPIRE AND SHE WILL EVENTUALLY DESTROY KAIL.

I DON'T THINK SO.

AFTER WATCHING KAIL TODAY, I CAME TO REALIZE...

...THAT GIRL MAY WELL BE OF MORE VALUE TO ME ALIVE THAN DEAD.

JUST WAIT AND SEE, URHI.

IF I'M RIGHT, KAIL WILL ANNOUNCE TOMORROW ON THE SENATE FLOOR...

...THAT HE INTENDS TO MARRY THAT GIRL. IMAGINE HOW THAT NEWS WILL BE RECEIVED.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

SENATE SESSION

Y...YOUR MAJESTY...

...PLEASE, WOULD YOU REPEAT WHAT YOU JUST SAID?

I SAID...

...I WOULD LIKE TO TAKE YURI ISHTAR..

...AS MY WIFE.

KAIL, ARE YOU SERIOUS?

YOU KNOW NAKIA AND THE SENATE WILL NEVER ACCEPT THAT!

HE'S SAID IT!

...

HIS MAJESTY HAS FINALLY..

...SAID THE WORDS WE'VE LONGED TO HEAR!

THEREFORE, I WOULD TAKE HER AS MY WIFE. SHE IS MORE THAN FIT TO BE QUEEN...

...OF OUR GREAT NATION.

MURMUR

MURMUR

MURMUR

I BELIEVE NO SENATOR WOULD DISAGREE THAT...

...YURI HAS ALL THE QUALITIES ONE WOULD WISH FOR IN A QUEEN.

SO IT IS BEFORE YOU— MY CHOICE FOR MY BRIDE IS *YURI ISHTARI*

THE WIFE OF OUR KING MUST BE CHOSEN FROM THE HITTITE ROYAL FAMILY OR FROM THE ROYAL FAMILY OF A FOREIGN COUNTRY! THIS IS OUR CUSTOM!

KU KI

YOUR MAJESTY!

YOU KNOW THIS IS UNACCEPT-ABLE!

WHY MUST YOUR MAJESTY UPSET THINGS LIKE THIS?!

SENATOR AYGIL IS RIGHT!

KLINK

...MANY COUNTRIES THAT HAVE DECLINED BY EXCESSIVE ADHERENCE TO IT.

I RESPECT TRADITION, BUT I ALSO KNOW....

YOU ALL KNOW THIS IS HARDLY OUT OF KEEPING WITH WHO I AM.

I'D RATHER MARRY THE WOMAN...

...WHO BEST SUITS ME AND MY COUNTRY, THAN TO CHOOSE A WIFE...

...SOLELY AS CUSTOM DEMANDS.

COME THIS WAY, YURI.

KAIL!

WE DO NEED SOMEONE WITH UNCHALLENGED INTEGRITY...

...AS OUR QUEEN. WE SHOULD NOT PLACE SO MUCH WEIGHT ON TRADITION.

MURMUR

I WOULD SAY...

...YURI ISHTAR WOULD MAKE A SPLENDID QUEEN.

BUNZ

BUNZ

KLUNK

TRADITIONS EXIST BECAUSE THEY'VE PROVEN THEIR WORTH!

HOW CAN YOU *SAY* THAT?!

SNARL

ME AS WELL!

AND ME!

HONOR THEM TO THE EXCLUSION OF ALL THAT THE FUTURE PORTENDS? I THINK NOT! I AM FOR ACCEPTING ISHTAR AS OUR QUEEN!

GROWL

WE MUST HONOR THEM!

...THE QUEEN DOWAGER!

THUS THE MATTER RESTS WITH THE SECOND MOST POWER-FUL DECISION-MAKER...

...AND HE LONGS TO HAVE PRINCESS YURI AS HIS WIFE.

THE MOST POWERFUL INSTITUTION IS THE KING...

THE SENATE IS SPLIT IN TWO.

OF OUR THREE PRINCIPAL DECISION-MAKING INSTITUTIONS...

...ONE IS NOW BITTERLY DIVIDED.

THERE'S NO WAY NAKIA WILL SUP-PORT IT.

YOUR HIGHNESS, MAY WE ASK YOUR OPINION ON THIS MATTER?

YOU CAN'T MARRY ME, KAIL.

I HAVE NO OBJEC-TION...

...TO HIS MAJESTY'S PROPOSAL.

HUH?!

EVERYONE KNOWS HIS MAJESTY LOVES YURI ISHTAR DEARLY.

YOUR HIGHNESS!

...FOR ONE, WOULD RATHER ENSURE HIS HAPPINESS. I BELIEVE THERE'S ROOM FOR COMPRO-MISE.

PREVENT-ING THIS MARRIAGE WOULD SADDEN HIM, AND I...

OOOK

?!

WE MUST...

NAKIA'S *SUPPORTING* KAIL? WHY?

...BE MET BEFORE WE ACCEPT YURI ISHTAR AS OUR QUEEN.

THEREFORE, I WOULD LIKE TO PROPOSE THAT A CONDITION...

...OF COURSE, ACKNOWLEDGE THE SENATE'S CONCERN FOR TRADITION.

HE ALSO PRESENTLY LACKS A COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF FOR HIS MILITARY.

AT THIS MOMENT, HIS EXCELLENCY KING MURSILI II HAS NEITHER SPOUSE NOR ISSUE.

IF YURI ISHTAR SHOWS SHE CAN SERVE HIS MAJESTY IN THAT LATTER CAPACITY...

...I WILL QUITE HAPPILY ACCEPT HER AS THE NEXT QUEEN OF THE HITTITE EMPIRE.

OUR PEOPLE PROCLAIM HER ISHTAR, GODDESS OF WAR.

LEADING OUR MILITARY IS THEREFORE THE MOST SUITABLE POSITION FOR HER TO ASSUME.

YOUR HIGHNESS!

M..ME AS COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF?

WHAT BETTER OPPORTUNITY COULD THERE BE FOR THE GODDESS OF WAR TO SERVE OUR NATION?

AS YOU KNOW, WAR WITH EGYPT IS IMMINENT.

NO WOMAN HAS EVER SERVED IN THAT CAPACITY!

YURI MUST SERVE AS THE MILITARY COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF...

PRINCESS YURI, COM-MANDER-IN-CHIEF...

THAT'S PERFECT! SHE'S A NATURAL FOR THE JOB!

HOO! HAH!

TRUE ENOUGH!

NO QUESTION PRINCESS YURI WAS BORN TO LEAD.

...IN ORDER TO BECOME MY WIFE?

BUT WHY DOES ...

...THE QUEEN DOWAGER SEEM TO AGREE?

I CAN'T DO IT, KAIL!

THE REASON I CHOSE TO STAY IS BECAUSE I LOVE YOU, THAT'S IT.

I'M NO ONE SPECIAL!

I CAN'T ASSUME SUCH AN IMPORTANT OFFICE.

THE ANSWER WILL BE THE SAME!

THIS DECISION IS ENTIRELY YOURS, YURI.

THINK ABOUT IT UNTIL THE SENATE NEXT CONVENES...

I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR A WOMAN...

...WITH WHOM I CAN SHARE MY LIFE AND THIS EMPIRE, AN EMPIRE...

...WHICH CONTROLS HALF THE ORIENT.

I'M THRILLED THAT YOU WANT TO MARRY ME, BUT...

I CAN NEVER BE YOUR QUEEN!

YOU UNDER-ESTIMATE YOURSELF, YURI.

...THIS IS JUST *TOO MUCH!*

I WILL DO ALL I CAN TO MAKE YOU HAPPY, BUT LEADING THE IMPERIAL FORCES? IMPOSSIBLE!

BUT I DON'T...

...REALLY BELONG TO THIS WORLD.

...LEADER..

I'VE NEVER SEEN A MORE NATURAL ...

...THAN YOU. YOU COULD CHANGE THE WORLD.

AND YET... WILL THAT ALTER THE COURSE OF HISTORY?

UH...

UNGH!

THIS ISN'T MY WORLD... I'M HERE BECAUSE I LOVE KAIL.

OH...!!

YOU KNOW WHAT, URHI?

BECOMING QUEEN...IT'S TOO GREAT A BURDEN...

FAR RARER THAN A GOLD NUGGET...

...LYING ON TOP OF THE DESERT SANDS.

A WOMAN WHO CARES ABOUT HER NATION AND ITS PEOPLE, AND WHO HAS THE ABILITY TO LEAD, IS RARE.

YOUR HIGHNESS ...

...SEEMS TO BE SUCH A WOMAN.

SNAP

THAT LITTLE SNIP OF A THING I PULLED INTO OUR WORLD...

THAT GIRL...

...COULD PROVE VERY IMPORTANT FOR THIS NATION.

AND KAIL IS SO MUCH IN LOVE WITH HER THAT HE CAN CARE...

...FOR NO ONE ELSE. HE MAY FINALLY BE GETTING AN INKLING...

...OF HOW
OVERWHELMING
IT CAN BE TO
BECOME SO
DEEPLY
ATTACHED LIKE
THAT.

KAIL...

...I'M SCARED.


I'M SO HAPPY THAT YOU LOVE ME...
...BUT MAKING ME YOUR WIFE IS ASKING TOO MUCH.


REALLY? OF WHOM?


...GOD?
I DON'T KNOW...
...PERHAPS...

...I WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO LET YOU GO ONCE I DID.

FOR A LONG TIME I WOULD NOT MAKE LOVE TO YOU...

... BECAUSE I KNEW...

I WASN'T WRONG.

WHATEVER HAPPENS, I'LL NEVER LET YOU LEAVE ME.

...TO THINK OF LOSING HER. IF I DID...

I KNOW IT'S A DANGEROUS SITUATION, BUT...

...I'D LOSE EVERYTHING. MY EMPIRE, MY DREAMS AND MY LOVE...

...WOULD VANISH!

I NEVER IMAGINED I COULD FALL SO COMPLETELY IN LOVE.

THE CLOSER I DRAW TO YURI, THE MORE UNBEARABLE IT IS...

AS FOR GOD, WHAT IS DIVINE DISAP-PROVAL...

...COMPARED TO BEING ABLE TO BE WITH YOU FOREVER?

GOOD LORD, ILBANI!

YOU THINK THE QUEEN DOWAGER WANTS PRINCESS YURI TO BE THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF...

...SO SHE'LL BE *KILLED* ON THE BATTLE-FIELD?

...THERE'S NOTHING TO BE DONE ABOUT IT!

I THOUGHT THE QUEEN DOWAGER NEEDED HER AS A SACRI-FICE...

...IN SOME SORT OF RITUAL TO ATTAIN POWER. ISN'T THAT SO?

THAT'S WHAT I THINK.

AS THE LEADER OF OUR MILITARY, PRINCESS YURI WILL BE EXPOSED TO ALL SORTS OF DANGERS.

LIKE... WHAT, SIR?

YES, BUT PERHAPS SHE'S SEEN A BETTER WAY TO THAT GOAL.

HER IMPORTANCE TO THE EMPIRE HAS LARGELY FOLLOWED SUIT.

PRINCESS YURI HAS BECOME INCREASINGLY DEAR TO HIS MAJESTY.

YOU'RE RIGHT, ILBANI!

I THINK... NOT.

WE MUST CONVINCE PRINCESS YURI TO REFUSE THE OFFICE!

TRULY, ALL OUR FUTURES HAVE COME TO REST ON THE FATE OF PRINCESS YURI.

IT WOULD DEVASTATE HIS MAJESTY, AND THE EMPIRE, IF SHE WERE LOST.

...TO BECOME OUR QUEEN. THE ONLY DANGER TO NAKIA...

NAKIA PLAYED THE ISHTAR ANGLE BRILLIANTLY. IT'S NOW THE ONLY WAY FOR PRINCESS YURI...

...IS IF PRINCESS YURI SUCCEEDS. WE MUST, THEN, PRAY THAT OUR ISHTAR WINS THROUGH TO VICTORY.



COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF...

IN MILITARY MATTERS ONLY THE KING HIMSELF HAS HIGHER AUTHORITY.

...OF THE HITTITE MILITARY. THIS INCLUDES LEADING THE ROYAL GUARDS THAT PROTECT THE HITTITE KING.

...CESS YURI...

...RI...

...YURI...

GASP

I'VE MADE UP MY MIND TO MARRY YOU.

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF...

HOW CAN SOMEONE LIKE ME SHOULDER SUCH A RESPONSIBILITY?

THOUGH IF I DO... I COULD BECOME QUEEN!

A CROWN PRINCE OR A PRINCE OF THE EMPIRE IS USUALLY APPOINTED TO THE POSITION.

ITS IMPORTANCE CANNOT BE OVERSTATED. HOWEVER, SINCE MURSILI II WAS ENTHRONED, THE POSITION HAS BEEN VACANT.

OH!

PRIN-CESS YURI!

YOU'RE DROP-PING YOUR FOOD!

...IS MY CHOICE. I CAN TAKE IT OR LEAVE IT.

SORRY. HIS MAJESTY SAID THAT BECOMING COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF...

...MADE THAT INTENTION PUBLIC. WHAT WAS HE THINKING?

HOWEVER, HE MEANS TO MARRY ME. HE'S EVEN...

I KNOW YOU HAVE A LOT ON YOUR MIND, BUT...

...TRY TO RELAX, AT LEAST WHILE YOU DINE.

PARDON MY INTRUSION, MA'AM.

KIKKURI? WHAT IS IT?

THAT IS NEWS, KIKKURI!

SO TELL ME, WHAT SENTENCES *HAVE* BEEN HANDED DOWN?!

HIS MAJESTY ORDERED ME TO IMMEDIATELY INFORM YOU OF THIS.

THE SENTENCES OF PRINCESS SELTO AND RUSAFA FOR...

...THE MURDERS AND YOUR ABDUCTION HAVE BEEN HANDED DOWN.

...AND WILL ONLY BE CONFINED TO A TEMPLE IN ARINNA FOR LIFE.

PRINCESS SELTO HAS ALSO BEEN SHOWN LENIENCY...

CONFINED ...FOR *LIFE?!*

HIS MAJESTY IS SHOWING UNCOMMON MERCY FOR SUCH CRIMES!

A LIFETIME UNDER HOUSE ARREST, HUH?

RUSAFA ...

...WILL BE DEMOTED FROM CHIEF OF THE ARCHERY UNIT...

HE'LL BE DEMOTED ...?

...TO AN ORDINARY SOLDIER. THIS IS QUITE LENIENT.

WHICH PROVED THE VITAL MITIGATING FACTOR.

BUT IT WAS REALLY NAKIA'S DOING...

I BELIEVE RUSAFA IS IN HIS OFFICE PACKING HIS THINGS.

PRINCESS SELTO IS PREPARING TO LEAVE FOR ALINNA TODAY.

WHAT ARE THEY DOING RIGHT NOW?

TODAY?

WELL, I HEAR YOU'RE LEAVING FOR ALINNA TODAY...

HAVE YOU COME HERE TO SEE ME OFF?

OH, PRINCESS YURI.

PRINCESS SELTO!

...AND...

...WELL, I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY...

I WILL SPEND THE REST OF MY LIFE PRAYING FOR THE PRINCESSES I MURDERED. I WISH HIS MAJESTY AND OUR EMPIRE PEACE AND PROSPERITY.

ISHTAR, I AM..

...GRATEFUL FOR HIS MAJESTY'S RULING. I DESERVED DEATH.

AND I WILL PRAY ESPECIALLY FOR YOU...

...TO TRIUMPH, AND BECOME OUR QUEEN.

...HOPES I'LL BECOME QUEEN?

EVEN PRINCESS SELTO...

CHUCKLE

CHUCKLE

HA HA HA

HOW ABOUT SOME NICE FIGS OR POMES, EH?

THESE ARE GOOD BEANS.

THEY'RE ON SPECIAL TODAY.

HA HA.. THAT'S JUST LIKE A MAN.

BY THE WAY, MY HUSBAND...

LOOKS YUMMY...

IT LOOKS YUMMY.

THE WELFARE OF THE HITTITE PEOPLE IS HIS RESPONSI-BILITY.

KAIL MURSILI II IS KING OF THE HITTITIE EMPIRE.

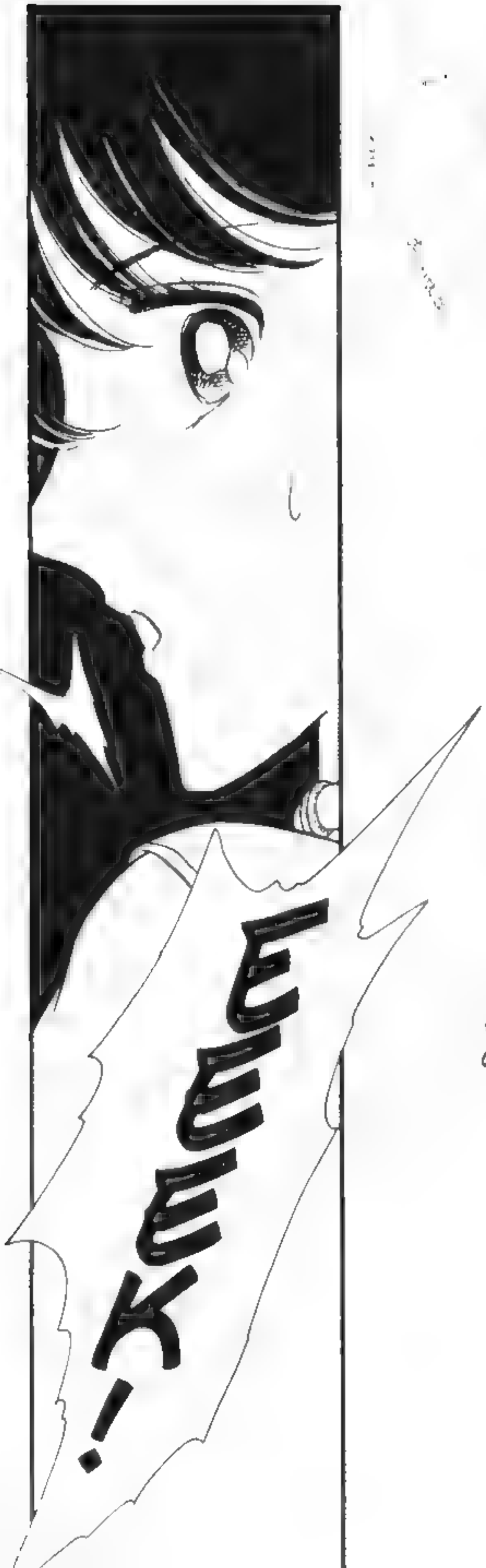
...HATTUSA, THE HITTITE CAPITAL, IS THE LARGEST AND MOST PROSPER-OUS CITY IN THE ORIENT.

STRETCHING FOUR KILOMETERS NORTH TO SOUTH...

...TWO AND A HALF KILOMETERS EAST TO WEST...

I WOULD SHARE THAT RESPONSIBILITY WITH HIM.

I WOULD SHARE THE BURDEN WITH HIM IF I COULD, BUT...



STAY OUT OF THIS, WOMAN!

WE ARE THE QUEEN DOWAGER'S MEN. OBEY US, OR WE'LL KILL YOU.

NO!

MOTHER, HELP ME!

WE'LL SEND YOU HOME AFTER... IF YOU'RE A GOOD GIRL.

WE'D JUST LIKE YOUR COMPANY WHILE WE DRINK.

THUGS, EVERY ONE.

SOLDIERS OF NAKIA'S PRIVATE ARMY.

IMPUDENT GIRL!

YOU TWO GO HOME.

WH... WHAT THE HELL...?!

WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?!

...DOING IT AT THE KING'S PALACE.

I'LL ENTERTAIN YOU WHILE YOU DRINK AS LONG AS YOU DON'T MIND...

HMPH!

IS... IS SHE...

IVORY SKIN!

BLACK EYES!

THE... KING'S PALACE?

BLACK HAIR!

RAMSES...

...ONCE TOLD ME THAT IN ORDER TO RULE...

BUZZ BUZZ

ISHTAR!

OH, MY GOD!

I AM JAPANESE, NOT HITTITE.

THAT DOESN'T BOTHER ANY OF YOU?

AND NAKIA'S JUST THE OPPOSITE!

HE'S RIGHT!

...SUCCESSFULLY, A MAN NEEDS A WOMAN...

...WHO IS AS CAPABLE AS HE IS AT HIS SIDE.

THEIR QUEEN DOWAGER, NEFERTITI, IS NOTHING BUT TROUBLE.

IT'S THE SAME IN EGYPT.

PRIN-CESS YURL...

...YOU'RE HITTITE, AREN'T YOU?

HUH? WELL...

...WHAT DO YOU THINK I AM?

YOU MEAN...

...THE PEOPLE WHO FOUNDED MITANNI?

YES, I AM.

BUT MY HERITAGE IS HURRIAN.

...SEVERAL HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

AND ILBANI'S ASSYRIAN ANCESTORS ARRIVED IN HATTUSA...

YES. MY PARENTS IMMIGRATED HERE BEFORE I WAS BORN.

...WE ARE ALL HITTITES.

BUT AS LONG AS WE LIVE IN THIS LAND...

AND WE THREE SISTERS ...

...ARE HATTIS BY ORIGIN, YOU KNOW.

...KIKKURI...

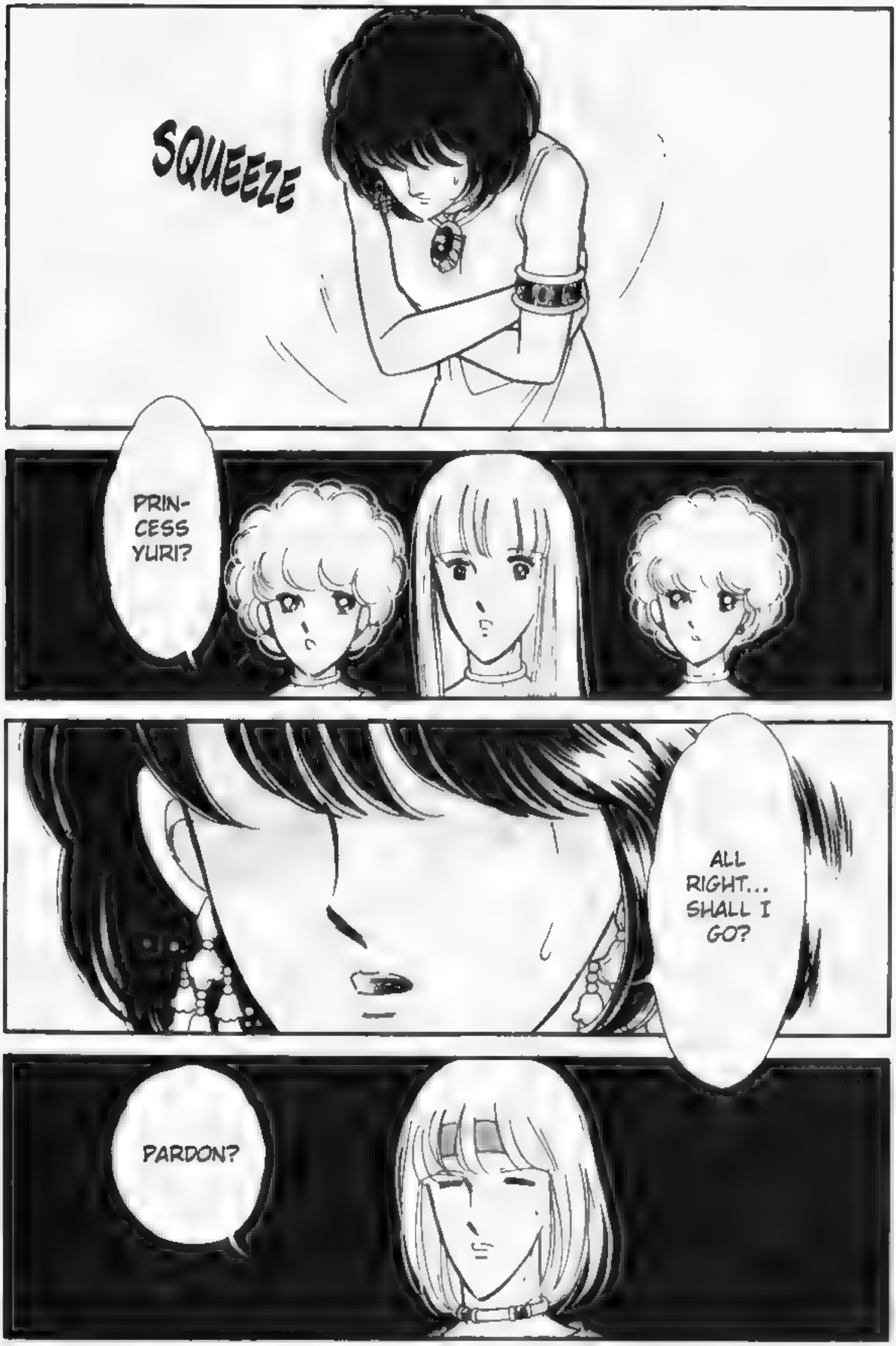
HADI...

...RYUI, SHALA...

AS FOR GOD, WHAT IS DIVINE DISAP-PROVAL ...

...COMPARED TO BEING ABLE TO BE WITH YOU! FOREVER?

KAIL!


SQUEEZE
PRIN-
CESS
YURI?
ALL
RIGHT...
SHALL I
GO?
PARDON?


DESCENT

...I AM ABLE TO GO?

...AS FAR AS...

SHALL I GO...

SENATE MEETING

FIRST ON TODAY'S AGENDA..

...IS THE QUESTION OF YURI ISHTAR'S APPOINTMENT AS COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE HITTITE ARMIES.

MAY I ASK YURI ISHTAR'S THOUGHTS ON THE MATTER?

HIS MAJESTY SAYS IT IS UP TO ISHTAR TO MAKE THAT DECISION.

...MAY I CONFIRM ONE THING?

BEFORE I ANSWER...

IS THAT STILL THE SOLE CONDITION YOU WOULD HAVE FULFILLED?

YOUR HIGHNESS, YOU SAID YOU WOULD ACCEPT ME...

...AS QUEEN IF I SUCCESSFULLY SERVE AS HIS MAJESTY'S COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF.

OF COURSE IT IS.

WE HAVE AGREED THAT WE WILL WELCOME YOU AS OUR QUEEN IF YOU RETURN...

...ALIVE AND WELL FROM A SUCCESSFUL CAMPAIGN AGAINST EGYPT.

SENATORS? HOW...SAY YOU?

IF THAT'S SO, THEN...

...COM-MANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE HITTITE ARMIES.

...I AM PLEASED AND HONORED TO BECOME...

YURI...

YURI ISHTAR ASSUMED THE POST OF GAL MESHEDI...

...IN THE ENTIRE HISTORY OF THE HITTITE EMPIRE.

...THAT IS, COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE HITTITE ARMIES, THE ONLY FEMALE TO DO SO...

ABOUT THE SAME TIME...

...ACROSS THE MEDITERRANEAN, EGYPT'S AGED KING AY PASSED AWAY.

GENERAL HOREMHEB, HUSBAND OF ONE OF THE KING'S RELATIVES, SUCCEEDED TO THE THRONE.

...

THIS WAS THE BEGINNING OF EGYPT'S MILITARY REGIME.

KORAAH

KORAAH

RED RIVER™

Yuri, a teen of the 21st century, has been transported to ancient Anatolia as part of a scheme by the evil Nakia, Queen of the Hittites. Only the intervention of Nakia's stepson, Prince Kail, saved Yuri from the Queen's bloodthirsty intentions. As an unintended consequence, the people of Anatolia are now convinced that Yuri is the incarnation of the great war-goddess Ishtar.

Kail's trusted commander Rusafa, under the influence of Nakia's black water, has made off with Yuri and turned her over to Nakia's henchman Urhi. Kail is not fooled—his suspicions land squarely on Nakia, and he has her placed under house arrest. Kail then prepares to perform a public prayer, promising the Queen Dowager that she will be put to death if Yuri does not appear by the end of the ceremony. Nakia knows this is no bluff and has Urhi arrange for Yuri's timely rescue, though that very rescue could well lead to the innocent Rusafa's ruin!



Over 15 million copies sold in Japan!

$9.99 USA/$12.99 CAN



This book reads from right to left.

viz media

RATED T+ FOR OLDER TEEN

ISBN 13 978 1 4215-0558-9
ISBN 10 1 4215-0558-4



